

Name: Molly Sedach

Serial Killer Notes

Characteristics

What is a serial killer?

- Has committed more than 3 murders
- Murders committed over a short period of _____
- Very cautious about their murders
- In between their crimes, they appear to be quite normal, a state which has been called the "mask of sanity."

Common Misconceptions

- Social misfits, dysfunctional or "loners"
- Have no social control _____
- Are "evil geniuses" or insane
- Always white male

Top 10 Most Common Traits

- 10 – alcohol and substance abuse
- 9 – Psychological abuse during childhood
- 8 – Sexually stressful events in childhood
- 7 – Bedwetting
- 6 – Growing up lonely and isolated
- 5 – Fantasies
- 4 – Preferring alone activities
- 3 – voyeurism in adulthood
- 2 – Acting out fantasies on animals _____
- 1 – Physical injuries (*often head trauma*)

Most Common Profile

- Mostly white males with average intelligence, average age is 29 _____
- Usually from unstable home
- absence of a loving and nurturing relationship
- Physical ailments or disabilities (*head injuries common*)
- Triad – *Animal Cruelty, Bedwetting, Pyromania*

The McDonald Triad

Animal Cruelty, Bedwetting, Pyromania

(for this section it's mostly just educated guesses because there is no McDonald Triad) -molly

- **Animal Cruelty** – Practice torture or murder techniques on animals or pets before moving onto humans. *Dahmer often mutilated and tortured stray dogs*
- **Bed-wetting** – 60% of serial killers wet their bed during adolescence
- **Pyromania** – Destruction is exciting and fun. Easy to make the jump from destruction of property to destruction of human _____.

Categorizing the Serial Killer

- **Killer**
 - sex, race, age _____
 - IQ
 - psychopathology
- **Crime Scene**
 - type of weapon _____
 - use of torture
 - attempt to hide body
- location
- **Motive**
 - sex
 - power _____
 - financial gain
- **Victim**
 - sex, race, age
 - occupation
 - personality _____

Organized vs. Disorganized

- The FBI classified serial killers into 3 large groups:
 - *organized* _____
 - *disorganized* _____
 - *mixed* _____
- Serial killers can evolve from organized into disorganized

The Crime Scene

| <u>Crime Characteristic</u> | <u>Disorganized</u> | <u>Organized</u> |
|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Body | disfigured | hidden |
| Weapons | finds at scene | brings |
| Viciousness | torture | quick _____ |
| Sophistication | low _____ | high, learns each time |
| Totem | not taken | taken _____ |
| Follows crime in news | no _____ | yes |
| Victim | high risk | low risk _____ |
| Gets to crime by | walking or bus _____ | drives |
| Residence | close to crime | further |
| IQ | less intelligent | intelligent _____ |
| Employment | menial/unemployed | normal _____ |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| • Appearance | unattractive | attractive_____ |
| • Self-image | feels inferior | feels superior |
| • Social | loner_____ | outgoing |
| • Romance | lives alone | affairs, short_____ |
| • Anger | keeps inside | acts out, bully, class clown |
| • Birth order | youngest_____ | oldest _____ |
| • Childhood discipline | harsh | lax or inconsistent |

MOs and Signatures

- **Modus Operandi** refers to common aspects of the criminal's activities that might change according to circumstances (e.g., means of access, posing of the copse, insertion of weapons).
- **Signatures** are unique and stable, revealing psychological needs (e.g., ritual aspects of crime, nicknames, posing the corpse, inserting objects).
- Latter more useful for *linkage analysis* – determining if same individual is responsible for various crimes.

Souvenirs and Trophies

- Serial killers often keep mementos of their victims.
 - **Souvenirs:** *personal* items allow the killer to enjoy the memories
 - A **trophy** can become something of a shrine

Geographic Areas

- Most murders take place within one mile of the offender's home
- However, there is a buffer zone as killers don't want to attack too close to their own home
 - *adult* offenders tend to travel further than do *juvenile* offenders;
 - robbers tend to travel longer distances than do burglars;
 - body dump sites tend to be further from the killer's residence than from the sites they meet their victims

Methods & Motives for Males

Methods

- 1. firearms mainly (41%)
- 2. suffocation (37%)
- 3. Stabbing (34%)
- 4. bludgeoning (26%)
- 5. Firearms only (19%)
- 6. poison_____ (11%)
- 7. Drowning (3%)

- 8. Other (2%)

Motives

- 1. Lust (55%)
- 2. Control (29%)
- 3. money (19%)
- 4. Enjoyment (16%)
- 5. Racism and hatred (11%)
- 6. Mental problems (6%)

7. cult inspired_(5%)

8. Attention (2%)

Female Serial Killers

Tend to use poison, kill those close to them and profit or “mercy” is the motive.

- **Black Widows** – kill husbands for inheritance or insurance_____.
- **Angels of Death** – often health professionals who kill “because they can” or out of a sense of mercy.
- **Folie a deux** – women who engage in lust killing usually do so in tandem with a male partner (*e.g. Myra Hindley, Rose West*).

Female Serial Killers: Methods & Motives

Methods

- 1. poison (80%)
- 2. Shooting (20%)
- 3. Bludgeoning (16%)
- 4. suffocation(16%)
- 5. stabbing_____ (11%)
- 6. Drowning (5%)

Motives

- 1. money (74%)
- 2. control_____ (13%)
- 3. Enjoyment (11%)
- 4. Sex (10%)
- 5. Drugs, cult involvement, cover up, or feelings of inadequacy (24%)

Why the decrease in the US?

- Technology
 - Insurance fraud is more difficult_____
 - Killing multiple patients is not likely to go unnoticed_____
- Longer prison sentences keep potential serial killers in prison
- Law enforcement efforts
 - Catch single murder more quickly (e.g., DNA)
 - Efforts on terrorism reduce the FBI’s ability to link serial murders
- Fewer available victims_____

Fewer Targets: We Have Changed Our Habits

- **Hitchhiking Related**
 - hitchhiking_____
 - Offering rides
 - Accepting an offer to “get in”
- **Disabled Motorists**
 - Offering assistance
 - Accepting assistance_____
- **Free-Range Kid Behavior**
 - Walking to/from school or the _____
 - Riding bicycles_____
 - Playing in the park_____

- Fishing and hiking alone